

Hulagu Khan, a grandson of Genghis Khan, was an avowed shamanist, but was nevertheless very tolerant of Christianity. His mother Sorghaghtani Beki, his favorite wife Doquz Khatun, and several of his closest collaborators were Nestorian Christians. One of his most important generals, Kitbuqa, was a Nestorian Christian of the Naiman tribe.[a] In 1238, the European kings Louis IX of France and Edward I of England rejected the offer of the Nizari Imam Muhammad III of Alamut and the Abbasid caliph Al-Mustansir for a Muslim-Christian alliance against the Mongols. They later joined the Mongols against all Muslims.[b][c] Louis IX of France had communications with the Mongols throughout his own crusades. During his first venture to Outremer, he was met on December 20, 1248 in Cyprus by two Mongol envoys, Nestorians from Mosul named David and Marc, who brought a letter from the Mongol commander in Persia, Eljigidei.[d] The letter communicated a friendly tone, and Eljigidei's envoys suggested that King Louis should land in Egypt while Eljigidei attacked Baghdad, as a way of preventing the Muslims of Egypt and those of Syria from joining forces.[e] Louis and his followers landed in Egypt on 4 or 5 June 1249 and began their campaign with the capture of the port of Damietta. Louis attempted a second crusade (the Eighth Crusade) in 1270. The Mongol Ilkhanate leader Abaqa wrote to Louis IX offering military support as soon as the Crusaders landed in Palestine. Louis went to Tunis in modern Tunisia. His intention was evidently to first conquer Tunis, and then to move his troops along the coast to reach Alexandria in Egypt. French historians Jean Richard and Alain Demurger stated that this crusade was a move in coordination with the Mongols, in that Louis had attacked Tunis instead of Syria following a message from Abaqa that he would not be able to commit his forces in 1270, and asking to postpone the campaign to 1271.[f][g]

Military collaboration between the Mongols and their Christian vassals became substantial in 1258–1260. Hulagu's army, with the forces of his Christian subjects Bohemond VI of Antioch (was the son of Bohemond V of Antioch and Lucienne of Segni, great-niece of Pope Innocent III), Hethum I of Armenia, and the Christian Georgians, effectively destroyed two of the most powerful Muslim dynasties of the era: the Abbasids in Baghdad and the Ayyubids in Syria.[h]

Work cited

[a] Ryan. pp. 411–421.

[b] Daftary, Farhad (1992). *The Isma'ilis: Their History and Doctrines*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 418–420. ISBN 978-0-521-42974-0.

[c] Daftary, Farhad. "The Mediaeval Ismailis of the Iranian Lands | The Institute of Ismaili Studies". www.iis.ac.uk.

[d] Jackson. "Crisis in the Holy Land". pp. 481–513

[e] Jackson. *Mongols and the West*. p. 181.

[f] Demurger. *Croisades et Croisés au Moyen Age*. p. 285. "Saint Louis's initial project in his second Crusade was an operation coordinated with the offensive of the Mongols."

[g] Richard. pp. 428–434.

[h] Morgan. *The Mongols*. pp. 133–138.